

SAFE TO GROW PROCEDURE FOR SELECTING CHILDREN'S WORKERS AND ADVOCATES

We should not assume that anyone could automatically be excluded from being a potential abuser. Therefore the Home Office guidelines (see appendix 1) must apply to anyone in contact with children or young people.

In particular we are asked:

To treat all would be workers as if they were job applicants, whether volunteers or not.

- To give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles.
- To gain at least one reference
- That appointment is conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.
- To explore the applicants previous experience.
- To discover whether the applicant has any convictions for criminal offences against children.
- That written acceptance of the Church's Policy Statement on child protection is condition of service for all workers.

Therefore the Ecumenical Partnership of West Swindon and The Lydiards has agreed the following procedure:

Stage 1 - Interview and Application

- An interview will be arranged with the supervisor at which the applicants' experience of working with children and/or young people will be explored.
- All new applicants will be asked to complete an Application Form (Appendix 2 – Form A)
- This shall be done, either during or, shortly following the interview. In either case it must be completed prior to commencement of work with children or young people.
- The applicant must provide two references one of which should be from a person who has experience of their work with children or young people.
- The supervisor will inform the Safe to Grow Co-ordinator of the new application.
- **A CRB check and registration will subsequently follow for every applicant.**

Stage 2 – Reference (Appendix 2 – Forms B)

- Due to the importance of maintaining confidentiality, references will be sought and held by the Safe to Grow Administrator at the Partnership Office.
- Using the Reference Request Form (B), references will be sought.
- All Reference Forms (B) will be returned to the Partnership Safe to Grow coordinator, at the Partnership Office.
- It is advised that verbal confirmation and clarification is also sought from references.
- Confirmation of the client's CRB Check will be received from the Diocese of Bristol

Stage 3 - Probationary Period and Training

- Appointment is conditional on the successful completions of a six-month probationary period or equivalent time period. This needs to be agreed with the applicant.
- The person responsible for supervision should use this time to give support and monitor the way the applicant Works with the children or young people.
- During the probationary period the applicant will receive training in 'Safe to Grow', on completion of which the 'Safe to Grow' Certificate (Appendix 2 - Form C) is to be signed by the 'Safe to Grow' trainer and awarded to the applicant.
- A record of all trained 'Safe to Grow' applicants to be held on file in the Partnership Office.
- The Applicant shall receive a 'Safe to Grow' pack containing:
 - The Policy Statement
 - Good Practice for the Whole Church
 - Good Practice for those working Directly with Children and Young People
 - Good Practice for Residential or Excursion Activities.
 - Procedures if Abuse is Disclosed or Discovered
 - A 'Safe to Grow' Certificate (Appendix 2 - Form C)
 - A signed Volunteers Contract (Appendix 2 - Form D)
 - A signed Declaration form (Appendix 2 – Form E)

Stage 4 - On Completion

- On completion of the agreed probationary period, the supervisor will recommend to the church committee whether the person is suitable for the post. If the committee so decides they will confirm the appointment and minute their decision. A contract with the church will be issued.
 - The Contract (Appendix 2 - Form D) should:
 - Give an accurate and clear description of the work agreed to.
 - Describe the support to be provided by the church.
 - Two copies shall be signed. One shall be held on file the other held by the applicant.
 - The applicant will complete the Declaration Form (Appendix 2 - Form E) indicating that they understand agree to the commitment being taken.

Additional Information

- All new applicants will follow the procedure set out above.
- Current workers will also be asked to complete any forms currently not on file.
- Advocates will be appointed annually at the church AGM, on the recommendation of the Church Committee or Leadership team.
- All forms will be kept in the Partnership Office.